

# Summary of the Bill

**The Safe Climate Act of 2007 (H.R. 1590) sets targets and requires the actions that will be necessary to avoid dangerous, irreversible warming of our planet.**

- Science tells us that we face a grave risk of irreversible and devastating global warming if global temperatures increase by more than 3.6°F.
- The bill sets greenhouse gas emissions targets that aim to keep temperatures below the danger point. The level of emissions is frozen in 2010 and then gradually reduced each year through 2050.
- The bill achieves these targets through a flexible economy-wide cap-and-trade program for greenhouse gas emissions, along with measures to advance technology and reduce emissions through renewable energy, energy efficiency, and cleaner cars.

## Targets

The Safe Climate Act freezes U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2010, at the 2009 levels. Beginning in 2011, it cuts emissions by roughly 2% per year, reaching 1990 emissions levels by 2020. After 2020, it cuts emissions by roughly 5% per year. By 2050, emissions will be 80% lower than in 1990. These goals are comparable to emissions reduction goals adopted by many states and called for by leading American companies, small businesses, religious organizations, environmental advocates, and others.

**Chart: Projected Global Warming Emissions Under Business-as-Usual vs. Emissions Targets of the Safe Climate Act.**

## Actions

The Safe Climate Act is implemented by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

The Safe Climate Act directs EPA to issue regulations sufficient to achieve the emissions targets through the combination of a cap-and-trade program and other measures.

The bill directs EPA to set a cap on greenhouse gas emissions from the largest polluters and allow the polluters to meet the cap by buying and selling emissions allowances.

- Allowances are distributed according to a plan developed by the President, with an opportunity for Congress to ratify or modify the plan.
- Proceeds from auctioning allowances are deposited in the "Climate Reinvestment Fund."
- Revenues in the fund are dedicated to maximizing the public benefit and promoting economic growth, including supporting technology research and development, compensating consumers for any energy cost increases, providing transition assistance for affected workers and regions, and protecting against harm from climate change, such as safeguarding water supplies, protecting against hurricanes, and mitigating harm to fish and wildlife habitat.

The bill directs EPA to set standards for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles that are at least as stringent as the current California standards. EPA must tighten these standards in 2014 and periodically thereafter.

The bill directs the Department of Energy to establish national standards requiring an increasing proportion of electricity to be generated from renewable energy sources, reaching 20% of retail electricity sold in 2020.

The bill directs the Department of Energy to establish national standards requiring utilities to obtain, each year, 1% of their energy supplies through energy efficiency improvements at customer facilities. These savings would accumulate each year through 2020.

## **National Academies Review**

The bill directs the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council to review, every five years, our progress toward avoiding dangerous climate change. If the National Academies find that dangerous global warming is likely, they must identify the reductions needed and recommend additional national and international actions to achieve the reductions.